

**CITY OF SAINT PAUL
HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMISSION STAFF REPORT**

FILE NAME: 250 East 7th Street
DATE OF APPLICATION: April 1, 2016
APPLICANT: Walker Sign dba Lawrence Sign
OWNER: Dark Horse
DATE OF REVIEW: April 28, 2016
HPC SITE/DISTRICT: Lowertown Historic District
CATEGORY: Pivotal
CLASSIFICATION: Sign Permit
STAFF INVESTIGATION AND REPORT: Amy Spong
DATE: April 21, 2016

A. SITE DESCRIPTION:

More commonly known as the B & M Furniture building and then the Twin Cities Magic & Costume Shop, this Victorian Romanesque structure was constructed circa 1885 and is categorized as pivotal to the Lowertown Historic District. The three story buildings were originally constructed as two separate buildings but were joined at some point in time. The inventory form states the building is, "A well preserved, ornate late nineteenth century commercial structure that is one of the most significant buildings in the E. 7th Street commercial portion of the Lowertown District." The storefronts were altered but the buildings continued to retain a high degree of integrity in the masonry detailing, window frames and surviving cast iron on the storefront level. The buildings were rehabilitated for retail space on the first level and office on the upper two floors in 2006 by Domino Development and were awarded a 2007 St. Paul Heritage Preservation Awards for restoration/rehabilitation.

B. PROPOSED CHANGES:

The applicant is proposing to install 4 signs at the storefront and patio, in addition to exterior and interior vinyl window graphics along the bottom of the storefront and the transom. With the exception of the vinyl graphics, the exterior signs total 54 square feet. A projecting double-sided sign is proposed above the main entrance to Dark Horse Bar & Eatery. The sign will have the business logo and read "Dark Horse Bar & Eatery Est. 2015." The painted metal sign will have internal illumination that will light the white areas of the logo and the business name while the background is black. The proposed size of the sign is 8.4 feet tall by 3.6 feet wide for a total of 30 square feet. There are two projecting brackets that will house the electrical conduit and be attached into mortar joints. There is an existing conduit box at the proposed sign location from the last sign that was located there and approved by the HPC in 2006.

The applicant also proposes three vinyl banners attached to light poles along the neighboring side wall in the new patio area. The banners were installed without proper city permits and HPC review. All fixed elements within the new patio were also mostly completed without proper city approvals, including for HPC. The banners are attached to the light poles with aluminum brackets. Each banner is 2' x 4' for a total of 24 square feet.

Finally, vinyl graphics are also already installed near the bottom of the storefront glass and read "Restaurant/Bar/Brunch/Late Night." Dimensions were not provided in order to determine total square footage. HPC staff approved these graphics under **Certificate of Approval (COA) #15-162647** as interior graphics. Please note that a sign permit is not required for signs installed on the interior of the glass, only the exterior; however, the HPC still reviews signs that are affixed to glass whether interior or exterior. Because these were installed on the exterior, they are part of the current sign permit application and in need of review. Under the same COA, staff approved a vinyl graphic on the interior of the transom that reads "Dark Horse." The intention was that

this would be removed when the permanent projecting sign was approved; however, the current application under review indicates this sign will also remain.

C. BACKGROUND:

HPC staff originally met with the restaurant owner in September, 2015 to discuss a temporary and permanent sign proposal. An original application was submitted in December, 2015 but was incomplete. The applicant then switched sign contractors and HPC staff met with the restaurant owner and new sign contractor, Lawrence Sign, on March 9, 2016. A new application was submitted on April 1, 2016 and scheduled for an HPC public hearing on April 28, 2016.

D. GUIDELINE CITATIONS:

Lowertown Historic District Guidelines (Sec. 74-112)

II. Restoration and rehabilitation.

General Principles for Restoration and Rehabilitation

- a. *All work should be of a character and quality that maintain the distinguishing features of the building and the environment. The removal of architectural features is not permitted.*
- b. *Deteriorated architectural features such as cornices, chimneys and roof treatment, window and door openings, and exterior surface treatment should be repaired rather than replaced whenever possible. In the event of replacement, new materials should match the original in composition, design, color, texture and appearance. Duplication of the original design based on physical or pictorial evidence is preferable to using conjectural or "period" designs or using part of other buildings.*
- c. *Distinctive stylistic features or examples of skilled craftsmanship characteristic of structures of a period should be treated sensitively. Furthermore, if changes in use of a building are contemplated, they should be accomplished with minimum alteration to the structure and fabric.*
- d. *In general it is expected that buildings will be restored to their original appearance. However, alterations to buildings are sometimes worthy of preservation because they reflect a significant period of history of the buildings and the district. This significance should be respected and restoration to an "original" appearance may not always be desirable. All buildings should be recognized as products of their own time and not be altered to resemble buildings from another era.*

III. Signs and accessories.

Signs should be compatible with the character of the District, and blend with the character of the structures on or near which they are placed. Signs should not conceal architectural detail, clutter or detract from the intended facade; but rather complement the overall design of the building and the period in which it was built.

A. Materials. *Sign materials should complement the materials of the related building and/or the adjacent buildings. Surface design elements should not detract from or conflict with the related structure's age and design in terms of identification symbol (logo), lettering, and related patterns or pictures. Materials used should be the same as those used for signs during the period of the building's construction, such as wood, wrought iron, steel, and metal grill work. Newer materials such as extruded aluminum and plastics may not be appropriate.*

B. Types. *The sign type should enhance the building's design and materials. New billboards are not permitted in the Lowertown District.*

C. Location and method of attachment. *There should be no sign above the cornice line or uppermost portion of a facade wall. Signs should not disfigure or conceal architectural details. Painted signs of pedestrian scale may be permissible on glass windows and doors. The facade should not be damaged in sign application except for mere attachment. The method of attachment should respect the structure's architectural integrity and should become an extension of the architecture. Projecting signs should have a space separating them from the building. (Protection of architecture in method of attachment shall be regarded as a basis for granting variance of the normal zoning code prohibition against guy wire supports for projecting signs).*

D. Lighting. *Location of exterior lights should be appropriate to the structure. Signs should generally be lit from on the site. There should be no flashing, blinking, moving, or varying intensity lighting. Subdued lighting is preferred. Backlit fluorescent or exposed neon are generally inappropriate.*

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation relating to new construction:

9. *New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize a property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.*

10. *New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.*

E. FINDINGS:

1. On March 22, 1984, the Lowertown Heritage Preservation District was established under Ordinance No. 17120, § 2. The Heritage Preservation Commission shall protect the architectural character of heritage preservation sites through review and approval or denial of applications for city permits for exterior work within designated heritage preservation sites §73.04.(4).
2. **Classification of the building.** The building is classified as Pivotal to the architectural character and integrity of the Lowertown Heritage Preservation District. The building is also a multiple tenant building and a master sign plan is required to be submitted to the Department of Safety and Inspections in order for sign permits to be issued. This business is located within two storefront bays with potential for another business in the remaining.

Projecting Sign:

3. **General.** Generally, signs for street level businesses should be located along the first level and be scaled for pedestrians. The location of the sign is addressed under Finding 5 however, the size of the sign, at 30 square feet, is not appropriately scaled given the *character of the structure* and scale of the storefront bay. Staff also looked at similar multi-tenant buildings that have received approval or have applications under review for projecting signs: Barrio's is 24 square feet, Rayette is 11 square feet, World of Beers for 8 square feet and Handsome Hog for 11 square feet. The HPC also approved a projecting sign in this location for the Magic & Costume shop that was 24 square feet in 2006.
4. **Materials.** The proposed aluminum material was not a sign material commonly used during "the period of the building's construction." The guidelines also state "Newer materials such as extruded aluminum and plastics may not be appropriate." However, the aluminum will

have a painted finish which was a practice commonly used during the period of the building's construction. The intent of the guideline is met.

5. **Location and method of attachment.** The proposed sign does *not disfigure or conceal architectural details* and it does *have a space separating it from the building*, however, it is located above the storefront level between the second story windows. The applicant did propose two earlier locations at the storefront level but through discussions with staff, the proposed location does minimize further damage to the original iron detailing on the storefront. The transom supports were also not strong enough to allow for the sign to be installed at the transom.

As long as existing holes are reused or new ones are only into mortar joints, the attachment will comply. The method of attachment allows the sign to be removed in the future so that *the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired*.

6. **Lighting.** There is no flashing or blinking light proposed. The sign is not lit from on site as recommended by the guidelines, however, the conduit is concealed and only the white portions of the logo and lettering will be lit. In order to comply with this guideline, the lighting shall be *subdued*.

Patio Banners:

7. **General and Materials.** The proposed vinyl material was not a sign material used during "the period of the building's construction." The guidelines also state "Newer materials such as extruded aluminum and plastics may not be appropriate." The vinyl does not have a canvas appearance which is approved for awnings within Lowertown and generally, does *not blend with the character of the structures on or near which they are placed*. (The Zoning Code Section 64.122 includes vinyl banners installed with this type of brackets as temporary signs and must abide by rules for temporary signs. These banners will require review by the Department of Safety and Inspections.)
8. **Location and method of attachment.** The location of the banners is between two pivotal historic structures where an earlier stone building once stood. The banners are attached to non-historic lights poles with aluminum brackets. The brackets are not of a traditional design that is appropriate to the character of the District.
9. **Lighting.** The banners are not lit directly; rather the patio has string lights and three light fixtures.

Interior and Exterior Vinyl Graphics:

10. The vinyl window material was not a sign material used during "the period of the building's construction." The guidelines state "*Painted signs of pedestrian scale may be permissible on glass windows and doors*" and "Newer materials such as extruded aluminum and plastics may not be appropriate." The vinyl graphics on the storefronts can appear as painted signs if carried out appropriately. The interior graphic in the transom does not appear as a traditional painted sign given it is installed on the interior and the sign is redundant once a new projecting sign is approved in close proximity. The graphics along the bottom of the windows are pedestrian scaled and do comply with the guidelines.
11. The proposal for signage will not have an adverse effect on the program for the preservation and architectural control of the Lowertown Heritage Preservation District (Leg. Code §73.06 (e)) provided the conditions are met. Chapter 73.06 (e) states the HPC may approve an application subject to such conditions as may reasonably advance the purposes of the code and adopted preservation program.

F. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Based on the findings above, staff recommends approval of the city permit application provided the following conditions are met:

1. The projecting sign shall be reduced in size, and not be more than 25 square feet. Revised drawings shall be submitted to staff for final review and approval.
2. The vinyl banners in the patio are only approved on a temporary basis and must follow the applicable zoning codes for temporary banners. Variances may need to be sought if the banners are desired as permanent and additional HPC review will be required.
3. The interior vinyl graphic in the transom shall be removed when the projecting sign is installed.
4. No signage shall be attached into brick or stone, but into mortar joints only.
5. Any revisions to the approved plans must be submitted to the HPC and/or staff for review.
6. The HPC stamped approved plans must be kept on site during the construction project.

G. ATTACHMENTS:

1. HPC Application
2. Plans with photos



Saint Paul Heritage Preservation Commission
Department of Planning and Economic Development
25 Fourth Street West, Suite 1400
Saint Paul, MN 55102
Phone: (651) 266-9078
ApplyHPC@stpaul.gov

HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMISSION DESIGN REVIEW APPLICATION

This application must be completed in addition to the appropriate city permit application if the affected property is an individually designated landmark or located within an historic district. For applications that must be reviewed by the Heritage Preservation Commission refer to the HPC Meeting schedule for meeting dates and deadlines.

1. CATEGORY

Please check the category that best describes the proposed work

- | | | |
|------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Repair/Rehabilitation | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sign/Awning | <input type="checkbox"/> New Construction/Addition/Alteration |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Moving | <input type="checkbox"/> Fence/Retaining Wall | <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Application Review Only |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Demolition | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ | |

2. PROJECT ADDRESS

Street and number: 250 E. 7th St Zip Code: 55101

3. APPLICANT INFORMATION

Name of contact person: Shari King

Company: Walker Sign dba Lawrence Sign

Street and number: 945 Pierce Butler St

City: St Paul State: MN Zip Code: 55104

Phone number: 651 430 6711 e-mail: slking@lawrencesign.com

4. PROPERTY OWNER(S) INFORMATION (If different from applicant)

Name: Dank House

Street and number: 250 E. 7th St

City: St Paul State: MN Zip Code: 55101

Phone number: _____ e-mail: Paddy

5. PROJECT ARCHITECT (If applicable)

Contact person: _____

Company: _____

Street and number: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone number: _____ e-mail: _____

6. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Completely describe ALL exterior changes being proposed for the property. Include changes to architectural details such as windows, doors, siding, railings, steps, trim, roof, foundation or porches. Attach specifications for doors, windows, lighting and other features, if applicable, including color and material samples.

Attach additional sheets if necessary

7. ATTACHMENTS

Please list any attachments that are included in this application. Refer to the Design Review Application Process Checklist for required information or attachments.

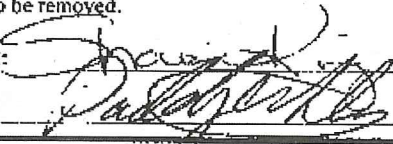
Attach the above listed to this application or attach in an email to ApplyHPC@stpaul.gov

Will any federal money be used in this project? YES ☐ NO ☒

Are you applying for the Investment Tax Credits? YES ☐ NO ☒

I, the undersigned, understand that the Design Review Application is limited to the aforementioned work to the affected property. I further understand that any additional exterior work to be done under my ownership must be submitted by application to the St. Paul Heritage Preservation Commission. Any unauthorized work will be required to be removed.

Signature of applicant:



Date: 3/21/16

Signature of owner:



Date: 03/21/16

Send completed application with the necessary attachments to ApplyHPC@stpaul.gov or to:

Saint Paul Heritage Preservation Commission
Department of Planning and Economic Development
25 Fourth Street West, Suite 1400
Saint Paul, MN 55102

FOR HPC OFFICE USE ONLY

Date received: 4.1.16

FILE NO. _____

Date complete: _____

District: _____ / Individual Site: _____

Pivotal/Contributing/Non-contributing/New Construction/Parcel

☐ **Requires staff review**

Supporting data: YES NO
Complete application: YES NO
The following condition(s) must be met in order for application to conform to preservation program:

It has been determined that the work to be performed pursuant to the application does not adversely affect the program for preservation and architectural control of the heritage preservation district or site (Ch.73.06).

HPC staff approval

Date _____

☒ **Requires Commission review**

Submitted: emailed

- ☐ 3 Sets of Plans
- ☐ 15 Sets of Plans reduced to 8 1/2" by 11" or 11" by 17"
- ☐ Photographs
- ☐ CD of Plans (pdf) & Photos (jpg)
- ☒ City Permit Application
- ☐ Complete HPC Design Review application

Hearing Date set for: 4.28.16

City Permit # 16 - 027 280

HPC Staff Notes

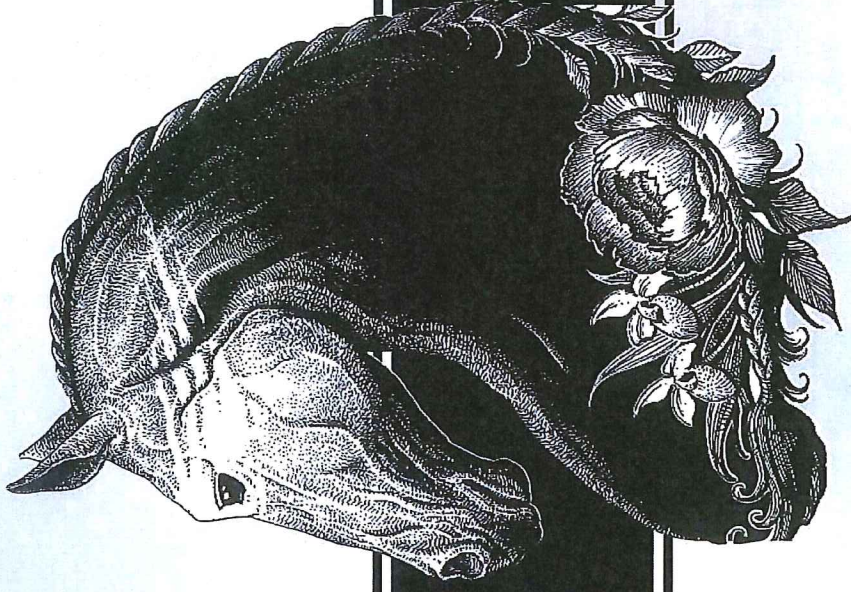
Lawrence
Sign

SIGN PACKAGE

03.24.16

DARK HORSE

BAR & EATERY



ST PAUL - MN



DARK HORSE
BAR & EATERY

250 EAST SEVENTH STREET
ST PAUL, MN 55101

D/F ILLUMINATED
BLADE SIGN

CUSTOMER APPROVAL

NAME: _____
DATE: _____

| | |
|------|----------------------------------|
| REV1 | 03.24.16 J1 - LIMITED NO DONKEYS |
| REV2 | |
| REV3 | |
| REV4 | |
| REV5 | |
| REV6 | |
| REV7 | |
| REV8 | |

SALES: DB PR:
DESIGN: RR
DATE: 03.21.16
DWG: 8827

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PROPOSED CONDITIONS



